

The Mad Cows and The Bull

A team from Birchanger has completed The British Heart Foundation London to Brighton Bike Ride

After setting off from Birchanger at 7 am on Sunday 19 June we arrived at the start (Clapham Common) in plenty of time for our 9.30 am start.

The temperature of the day was 30 degrees and rising which was a bit daunting as we knew we had 54 plus 2 miles to cycle.

It took us two and a half hours to get out of London but we were on our way. At that point our Bull left us, never to be seen by us again until we reached the finish.

Due to the heat we were all drinking what felt like gallons of water and as we passed through some really picturesque villages the locals were outside with hoses, buckets, jugs and beakers ready to soak the riders as we went through. It was a shock because we were so hot when the water hit you, but it was great, the atmosphere was so good it made up for the heat.

After about 40 miles we hit about a mile of road where the tarmac had melted. It felt like two steps forward and three steps back. It was such hard work and we were worried it would be like this for the last 14 miles or so. Luckily it wasn't and we did eventually get back on decent roads and the dragging back eventually stopped.

Then we reached Ditchling Beacon after about a mile of steep climbing. In the heat it was pure torture with the sun beating down, most people dismounted and walked (very painful). When we eventually reached the top we had a lump in our throats because we realised how far we had come and how hard it had been in the heat. I think we each had a very emotional moment on Ditchling Beacon.

After recovering ourselves we got back on our bikes to finish the final 5 miles (downhill) into Brighton to a very warm reception by the crowd, finally ending our journey at the end of the day at Brighton Pier.

The job then was for our chauffeurs Adrian and Tim Richards to get the bikes onto the trailer and ferry 6 very exhausted cyclists back to Birchanger.



**Cassie Leavers, Esther Glasscock,
Julie Richards, Carly Smith and
Lorraine Reed and our Bull Jamie Richards**

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS FROM *Elizabeth Godwin*

Burglars have a field day

August in Birchanger saw a spate of burglaries or attempted burglaries, where the thieves entered occupied premises in broad daylight. The most heinous of these were attempts to burgle vulnerable people, living on their own. In the last two months there have been five burglaries or attempted break ins in Birchanger. Three in Birchanger Lane, one in Harrisons and one at Duck End.

The police take a very dim view of this along with the rest of us. They made immediate house to house enquiries, although the victims have been too traumatised to report the intrusions immediately and the thieves have moved on to other villages to attempt to repeat their crimes. In their enquiries the police found at least two homes where the keys were left in the lock.

The thieves operate in twos. One will engage the householder at the door, while the other attempts to gain access, usually through an open window and searches the house for handbags, purses or for any spare cash or valuable items they happen to find. They will then exit with their accomplice through an open door and flee to a car which will be nearby, but not directly outside.

Please look out for your neighbours, particularly those who are away or isolated. Be very careful just who you answer the door to. Ask for ID if you are in doubt. The pair who have been seen to operate in Birchanger are believed to be Irish and in their twenties. They are known to have operated in Stansted and Takeley. They deserve not just the book but the whole library chucked at them for targeting the vulnerable in their homes.

Youth shelter wins lottery grant

The proposed youth shelter in the Recreation Ground has been awarded a lottery grant of £3674 to cover half its cost. The rest has been raised over the past two years from the fete at the pub, the litter pick, and a small grant from Essex County Council Youth Services.

The shelter project was begun following a request from a group of teenagers in the village. Many of them have contributed to the project. It is hoped that they will honour the support they have had, look after the shelter and leave the Church Lych Gate in peace.

Additional litter bins have been ordered, along with the shelter, so kids, it is up to you to look after it and keep the recreation ground free of litter. It is your project and it will be delivered soon. The shelter for the recreation ground has now been purchased, directly from a trade show, and at a bargain price. Work will start shortly on the installation. More next month.

Community Achievement Awards

September means that once again the District Council is looking for nominees for the annual Community Achievement Awards.

Last year's awards for Birchanger went to Rosemary Sayward and Ken Sturgeon. The categories are,

- A. Service to children and young people up to 18 years of age.
- B. Service to the elderly
- C. Service to people with disabilities.
- D. Service to the local community, or the environment.
- E. Youth Initiatives, which are nominations for young people aged 15-18, who have contributed significantly to their local community.

If you would like to nominate someone, or would like to discuss a nomination with me, please call 812793.

Parking In Birchwood

There are many elderly and disabled residents in Birchwood who may not be driving themselves these days. They do depend upon support from others who do drive and who need access to any drives attached to their properties. Lately, a selfish minority think it is OK to block these drives. It isn't, they know who they are and just what they should do about it. Please park with consideration.

War Memorial facelift passes another stage

Those who have generously offered funds and support for the repair of the War Memorial must have been wondering just what has been happening to the project. The fact is that it is easier to obtain planning permission for a new estate, than it is to go through the Diocesan hoops to obtain permission to do anything to any memorial in a churchyard. We have now obtained permission to apply for permission to repair the memorial or in Diocesan terms apply for a faculty but it could be months yet before this is finally granted. It will be, in the end.

New support group for Diabetes

Diabetes is becoming increasingly common. The diagnosis always comes as a shock to the patient and frequently leaves the sufferer feeling vulnerable and confused. It helps to know that there are a lot of people in the same boat but who are they? Up to now there has not been any organised support for the disease, which presents itself in different ways with each individual.

A support group is being developed in Uttlesford specifically for people with diabetes, in conjunction with the PCT by Ian Burgess from the Patient and Public Involvement In Health Forum. If you would like to have more information, or you would like to support the group, please call Ian through the CVS on 01371 878400, or at the forum office on 01371 874619.

Stansted Airport is determined to grow

As Stansted Airport reached its 21 million passenger per annum mark, BAA launched a public consultation regarding the better use of its single runway to increase passenger throughput up to at least 35 million passengers per annum in 2015, along with a draft interim master plan.

If you would like to see what BAA are planning, and to view the draft Interim Masterplan, BAA are holding a series of exhibitions in areas as far apart as Ongar and Haverhill. There is to be one in Birchanger in the Church Hall on Wednesday October 5th from 10am until 8pm, and a further exhibition in Stansted at the United Reform Church

Hall at the same time on the following day, Thursday October 6th.

Parish plan progress

The questionnaire for the Parish Plan will be finalised this month. The team have worked hard throughout the summer to complete the extensive questionnaire, which will be delivered to every household in the village this autumn by the team. The questionnaires may appear lengthy but the questions have been kept as clear and as brief as possible.

The questionnaires are in two parts. One designed to find the areas of concern in Birchanger, the other to discover life in the village as it is now. There will be a special questionnaire for those aged between 11 and 18 years to complete and the school will also be consulted so that the under 12's can make their views known through the school. There is nowhere anywhere on the form for a name and the questionnaires will be delivered by a member of the team, who will explain the document and the sealed envelope will be collected later. The envelopes will all be opened at random, so none of the team will have any idea at the time of opening the envelopes, where the particular form originated. The results will be printed in a Parish Plan booklet, which will again be delivered to every household. The plan will tell the community where Birchanger stands, and where the inhabitants believe the needs arise. The Village Design Statement will be based, as far as is practicable on the Parish Plan.

It may seem like another piece of bureaucracy but the results will be interesting and informative for everyone and could shape the future of Birchanger for years to come.

Junction claims another life

Sadly simply painting lines on the B 1383 at the junction with Birchanger Lane failed to prevent the tragic death of yet another motorist. The junction needs a proper roundabout. Long waits mean that those leaving Birchanger Lane become frustrated as they are unable to exit or enter the lane and risks are taken. Traffic coming on the B 1383 is often travelling too fast and cannot see vehicles until it is too late.

It is very hard to get highways to understand our concerns and there is too little money in the system

to go around. The Parish Council will continue to lobby for improvements to this junction and the lane.

Last month an HGV survey was undertaken. I am not convinced that a Thursday in August was the right time to undertake the survey. We await the results with little optimism for the immediate future, but we shall not stop trying.

How much has the Airport affected house prices in Birchanger?

There is no easy answer to this question, mainly for two reasons. The first is geographical. Houses to the south in Birchanger Lane, Duck End, Birchwood and Wood Lane suffer airport noise to a greater extent than those at the northern end of the Lane. Secondly, Birchanger contains a very differing house styles and ages, with older buildings tending to fetch higher prices, than the more recently built types.

The latest house price increases for the June quarter are further complicated by the fact that few houses actually changed hands in that period and are further complicated by some unusual sales. Basically, detached homes throughout Essex showed a 39% increase overall, while CM23 5

postcodes, which include Birchanger, registered only 9.5% increase. Semi-detached houses were roughly in line with the rest of Essex at around a 40% increase, while terraced houses, flats and maisonettes showed an astonishing 100% and 122% increase respectively. It will be interesting to see what the September quarter figures show.

Birchanger lies outside the airport schemes to buy property but several people in the affected area have already sold out to BAA, to the dismay of their neighbours. The sellers claim they have been compulsory purchased to save face. Actually there is no compulsory purchase scheme as yet. It just seems that for some residents, there is no alternative but to move. A little premature, as the story is not over yet and a lot of perfectly good homes are left empty.

The biggest Coffee Morning in the World will happen in Birchanger

Our Parish Clerk, Julia Peachey is to host the biggest Coffee Morning In The World For Macmillan Cancer Relief. This cause will strike a particular chord with many in Birchanger.

Please come and support her on Saturday October 1st from 10.30 am to noon in the Church Hall.





Demand FACTS from BAA

Full use of the existing runway would allow Stansted to become twice as big as today and could be the first step to a second runway

BAA wants your views on its latest plans to expand Stansted Airport. However, its consultation documents Growing Stansted Airport and Draft Interim Airport Masterplan contain little new information. The same is true of the Plane Talk leaflet advertising its public exhibitions.

Nevertheless, it is vital that we make our views known NOW because this so-called consultation is the first step in a plan that would see a DOUBLING of traffic on the existing runway. That could eventually lead to a SECOND RUNWAY, making Stansted bigger than the world's largest airport.

Stop Stansted Expansion (SSE) has prepared guidance to help local people to respond to the 'consultation'. Copies can be obtained by calling the campaign office on **01279 870558** or online at the SSE website at www.stopstanstedexpansion.com/baa_consultation.html

This suggests questions to ask your district and county councillors and your MP who were all elected to defend your interests. They can put pressure on BAA to obtain the answers which the airport developer has so far refused to address.

The consultation on the Draft Interim Airport Masterplan and 25+mppa proposals for Growing Stansted Airport closes on 31 October 2005. The broader programme is as follows:

Nov 05-Jan 06:	Consultation on proposed location of new runway
Spring 06:	Consultation on road/rail schemes for second runway
Spring 06:	Publication of confirmed interim masterplan.
	25+ mppa planning application submitted
Balance of 2006:	Environmental Impact Assessment studies for second runway.
	Public consultation on Draft Final Airport Masterplan
2007:	Publication of Final Airport Masterplan
	Submission of planning application for second runway
2013:	Earliest date for new runway to be operational
	If cross subsidy disallowed, 'several years' further delay

“Our Community – Our Responsibility”

Out of Birchanger

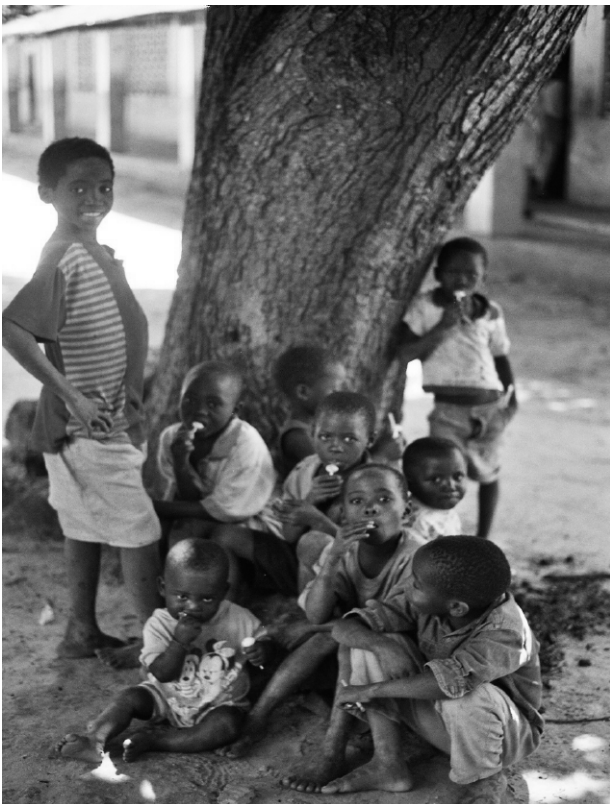
Fumbini primary school

As I indicated last month our Holiday in Kenya had a dual purpose. The organiser of our trip Anne Marie Beale had come laden with substantial aid (we all carried some) and had persuaded the hotel to hire a minibus to take us and our precious aid to the school (for a price naturally). So at ten o'clock we boarded our bus loaded up the aid and set off.

Fumbini primary school is situated near the town of Kilifi about a mile from the main road. There are about 1100 pupils at the school between 4 years old and twelve. The school premises comprise six buildings that are subdivided into classrooms, each classroom houses between sixty and ninety children. Including the headmaster Dammigott John (we just called him John!) there are ten staff. There is no electricity and no running water.

The children knew we were coming and excitement was very high, so when our minibus arrived there were a thousand waving, cheering children looking out of the windows and doorways, some simply left their classes to run up to the bus. John has a firm grip on his students and a word from him was all that was required to restore some order. The aid was then carried from the bus into the Head's office where it could be divided up.

The major item was a second hand computer and monitor. However there is no electricity at the school so it would be going to the headmaster's home a few miles away. The remainder was text books which stayed in the office, some classroom posters one of which featured African animals. But the bulk of it was pens, pencils and sweets for direct distribution to the children. The B.A.A had also thoughtfully provided some promotional badges with a teddy bear on them. A days proceeds from one of their car parks would have been more useful.



Some of the poorest each with a lolly

Once the packets of pencils, pens and the all important sweets had been divided up we were led around the school by John starting with the youngest children first.

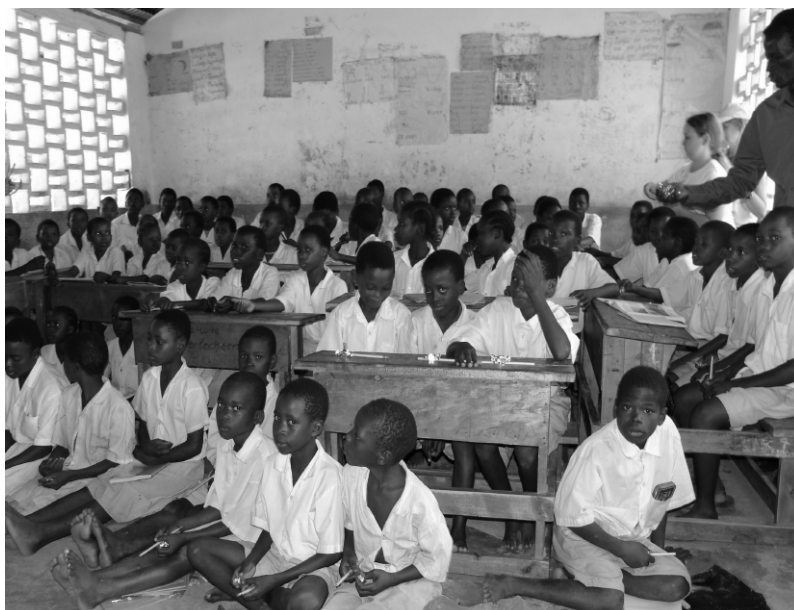
Primary school education is provided free in Kenya but the children have to have a uniform, so if your parents can't afford the uniform you don't go to school. This does not prevent the children from being there and there were a number of very young children dressed in rags hanging about but not allowed into class. This proved fortunate for them, as they were the first to get sweets.

Once into a classroom John would give us a brief rundown of what was going on, then the distribution began in earnest. One pencil, one sweetie, one badge each. The children were well behaved but very adept at palming their sweeties swearing blind they hadn't had one. Both the girls and boys have their hair cropped short so it was difficult to tell them apart. The biggest difference was that the boys were less shy. It quickly became obvious that there was an exchange and bartering of goodies going on so the

ones that did not fancy the European style sweets soon had more than one pencil. You just can't please everyone!

Most classrooms had a blackboard at one end, no chairs and no desks, so most of the children sat on the dirt floors. Books were piled on the teacher's table, where there was invariably a large stick. We were told that desks would cost about £3 each but the classrooms would never accommodate enough desk space for all the children who needed them, so only the older children had desks.

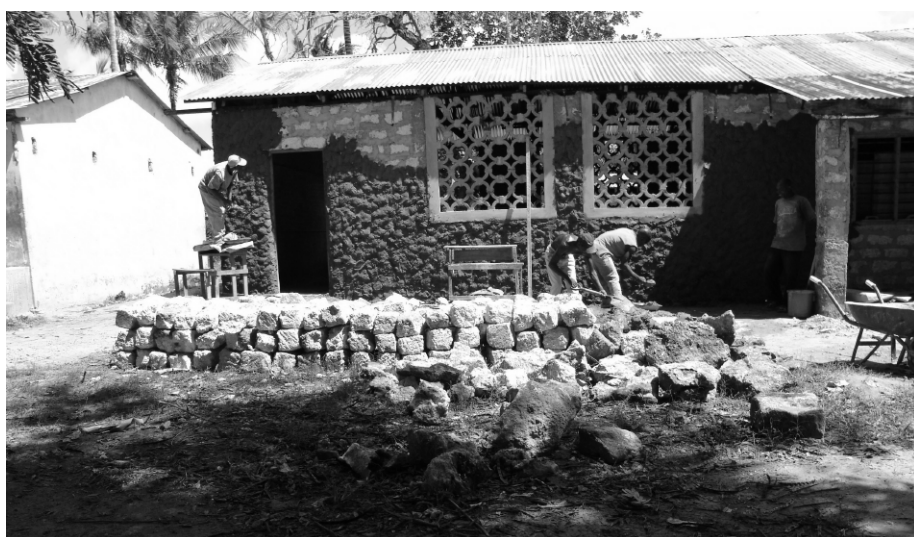
Photos were taken in each classroom and the reaction of the children to seeing the results instantly on a digital camera were amazing. They have no mirrors at home and some had never seen themselves before. They recognised each other but who was that stranger sitting with them?



View inside a typical classroom with Headmaster John on the right

The end of the tour came at a new classroom that is being built from funds raised by George Salter, another BAA security guard. The school has to be very careful about accepting cash donations as corruption is rife in Kenya. So by accepting cash John could lay himself open to charges and then the government would demand a portion for itself thus defeating the object.

After some more photos we took our leave with the children still demanding more sweets, alas we had none for them and drove away as they broke for their lunch. Waving to everyone as we went, I realised that the Queen must feel like this every day!



Built from donations a new classroom being rendered

We still had a small errand to do and delivered the computer to John's house a few miles away. While we were there we pulled up outside a small local shop. The shop was surrounded by more children, so more sweets were purchased and distributed. I noticed that the shop had stocks of pencils and crude exercise books, then I realised that we could have bought the stationary items locally, saved on our luggage allowance and helped the local economy as well. Isn't hindsight wonderful?

It was a very thoughtful bus load of tourists that made it back to the hotel because what we had done did not really scratch the surface. How long does a pencil and a Werther's original last?

HUNTING BATS IN HATFIELD FOREST

Are you stuck for what to do? Have you looked around you to see what's going on?

The saying goes don't knock it until you have tried it. I have recently joined the National Trust as a volunteer.

On the home front, I booked an evening going on a bat walk in Hatfield forest. I was accompanied by a friend and we met our fellow bat enthusiasts at the forest entrance at 9.30 p.m. There were a lot of families and the children were all excited brandishing their torches in the night sky like star wars. They were all suitably dressed in their wellies. My friend and I were beginning to think that we should have brought a child.

Beth our guide started the evening by telling us about the bats, the number of species and how many we were likely to detect in Hatfield forest. She expelled some of the myths about bats, for example being "blind as a bat". Bats are not blind, they use sophisticated echo location systems to fly and feed in the dark. We set off, following Beth to the shell house area where we were again given some information about the forest and the bats.

We ventured forth along the footpath to the forest area as bats were swooping above our heads but were no threat. The children walked along shining their torches. We came to a pasture where cows suddenly appeared where we least expected. Our new mission was to avoid all the cow pats. I suspect that most parents gave up. We walked to an ancient oak where the bats had nested. Two or three children were busy studying a slug at the bottom of the tree. Beth had to ask them to be quiet so that she could get out a bat detector device and set it to the frequency to hear the bats. We could hear them and identified them as Pipistrelles (our commonest species). Apparently the forest has about four species.

We proceeded to walk back to the lake and Beth handed out a few detectors for us all to have a go at detecting the species flying over the lake. I had been afraid of bats but now I had confronted that fear and it no longer existed. I have read up on the bats and they are quite fascinating creature.

There is a young bat workers club for children in the junior section of the Bat Conservation Trust, 15 Cloisters house, 8 Battersea Park road, London, SW,8 4,BG and on the web at <http://www.bats.org.uk> . There are information sheets on attracting bats to your garden, bats boxes, etc. So if you are stuck for somewhere to go, then go to the forest on a bat walk.

It makes me cross when I hear people say that there is nowhere to go or nothing to do. Having volunteered my services, I spent a day at a National Trust property serving tea, selling the postcards, etc and generally enjoying the company of other people. The property in question, Paycocke's House in Coggeshall, was celebrating 500 years and the tenants, their children and others had dressed in period costume. There were plays in the garden, the first was St George and the dragon. The players were in theatrical costume and they made it fun. The dragon had no fire and a merchant commented on it, it was all part of the play. The dragon also got the better of George and as he lay on the ground the merchant again stopped the production stating that they had got it wrong and that George was meant to be the hero.

Of course it was put right, much to the amusement of the crowd. Then George lay on the ground with a raging toothache and the children were involved in the pulling out of one bad tooth. It was hilarious, I was pleasantly surprised at the whole experience.

So come on, don't sit at home, look out and see what's on, and take some chances and experience something that you would not normally do.

Sally Tilstone

From the Archive

As the school year is starting once again I've delved into Ruth Clewer's exercise books from 1935, for a look at how school holidays used to be for school children seventy years ago.

Whitsun Holidays

17th June 1935.

I enjoyed my holidays very much. School was shut up on Friday June 7th for a week's holiday. The weather was not very promising considering that it rained nearly every day, anyhow we had a few bright intervals.

There was no Sunday School on Whit Sunday but I went to Church as usual for it was a glorious day.

On Whit Monday there was a cricket match at the Birchanger working Men's Club ground. The first eleven played the Little Hallingbury men.

I went out with Cathie Player to help sell some artificial roses for Queenie Eden because she had cut her hand on Tuesday morning. We got as far as the Rectory and then Mr and Mrs Meeres came out in the car and called to us. Mrs Meeres asked us who we had taken on the job for and we told her. She then told us that we ought not to be selling them seeing that we were not eighteen years of age and that we were to go back to Queenie and tell her that she should have sent Mrs Meeres a note. We were also to tell her that Mrs Meeres was keeping the roses to give to someone else to sell. So we retraced our steps.

On Wednesday I went to Mr Osbourne's (the old Post office) to get some groceries for my Mother. Afterwards I went down the Rec with Cathie Player, Irene Harvey, Ethel Player and Earnie, Billy Gilbey and Betty.

On Thursday I went for a walk round with Audrey Sanford. On coming home I was given an egg for delivering a card at the club.

In the afternoon I clipped my Father's grave with a pair of scissors. At half past seven I went to choir practice. Afterwards we went onto Mrs Meeres' lawn to decide where we were going for our choir treat. We decided upon going to Felixstowe on July 16th and with that we departed.

On Friday I went to Stortford with my Mother through the fields. My brother, Eric Wright, George Banks and Dick Waterman had gone to the Castle Gardens to fish in the river Stort. When my Mother and I could not find them, we went into the town. When we got home I had my tea and then went out for a game of "Hot rice".

Your loving Scholar Ruth.

Continued over the page

I wonder how many of today's eleven year olds would go to clip their father's grave with a pair of scissors? What were the artificial roses being sold for? It was June and the real ones would have been in bloom. And could someone tell me how do you play "Hot rice"?

Quite topical this one

The 1934 Petroleum Act

March 31st 1936

The 1934 Petroleum Act said that all the oil found in England belonged to the British Government. The Government can give a permit to any company they wish, to bore down into the Earth in search of oil.

Mrs Crookshank, mother of Captain Crookshank has set in motion the machinery for drilling into the Earth in search of that wonderful liquid. This is taking place at Paulsgrove near Portsmouth. The Anglo Iranian oil Co are taking the risk of losing £60000 for they do not know whether they are going to find oil or not for only the drill can tell them whether it will be a success.

School News

Attention Dog owners, the School needs your support.

Since the children returned to school at the beginning of September, the school has experienced on a daily basis, an increasingly large amount of dog fouling on the school field. This has very obvious health implications for all the children who use the field each day.

The school is not a public recreation ground. Please do not allow your dog to exercise there, or to wander freely in the vicinity. Nobody wants harm to come to the children at the school, and these dogs are posing a serious risk, not to mention the distaste of those who have to clean up after them.

The holidays may not have seemed long enough for some, but it is back to work with a vengeance for everyone at Birchanger School. Seven new children were welcomed into Class 1, a number lower than had been expected for this year, as the school had hoped to find a regular intake number to even up class numbers throughout the school, but fluctuating birth rates make this almost impossible to achieve.

Training for the Football League has started, and the first match is against Clavering at the end of the month. Year 6 will be attending Crucial Crew in September. This is a scheme which provides children with many of the tools they will need to cope with daily life. The children visit four sets with differing scenarios, which include accident situations, fire safety, emergency calls, drug use, and much more.

Sir Alan Haselhurst will visit the school also this month. He will tour the school, meet staff and children, and will certainly face some interesting questions from the School Council.

BIRCHANGER OVER 60'S CLUB

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

SATURDAY NOV 19TH 2005

2.00 PM TO 4.00 PM

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IN THE CHURCH HALL



FROM 10.30 TILL NOON

Letters to the Editor

Dear Ed

Hope that I haven't missed the deadline for the Newsletter. I just wanted to write a note of thanks to all those who supported the Essex Air Ambulance merchandise stall on July 10th I raised £60.00 which for a small fete was very good also to let everyone know that it costs £100.000 per month to ensure that the air ambulance is operational, so a big thank you.

It was also a beautiful day and many thanks to Dave Paula and team and everyone else for making the event a success.

Regards
Cathy (Gooding)

Dear Sir.

For some time now I have been puzzled by the fact that, although "free papers" are delivered in Stansted, we in Birchanger are not allowed to have them (except your wonderful parish Magazine of course).

But it should be borne in mind that one of these papers namely the Saffron Walden Reporter carries so called "Public" notices almost every week from the planning department of the Uttlesford District Council.

My question therefore is. How can these notices be called "Public" when the public of Birchanger and other villages are not allowed to see them? I can only conclude that the Uttlesford District Council does not really want us to see them!

Is this therefore what is meant by "political correctness?" Or maybe it's incorrectness.

Yours sincerely.

RSW Brown.
54 Birchwood.

Ed's Note

I cannot believe that either the district or parish councils would wish to conceal planning applications by preventing "free papers" to be delivered in Birchanger. I rather think the main reason "free papers" are not delivered in Birchanger is because someone would have to pay for their delivery, or do it themselves. Do we have any volunteers?

USEFUL NUMBERS

Birchanger Church of England Primary School
Head Teacher Mrs. Denise Howell 812362

Birchanger Nursery Unit 07773730754
Admissions enquiries : Mrs Tina Crossley 814037

Birchanger Open Gardens Committee
Enquiries to: Miss Sheila Devereux 813843

Birchanger Social Club 812810

Birchanger Village Magazine
Editor Mr. Eddie Gilbey 816171

Brownies
Mrs Jenny Jameson 815396

Church in Birchanger
The Benefice office 815243.
Rector Rev'd. Andrew Spurr 812203
Church Warden Mrs. Joy Wright 813893

Church Hall Mrs. Ann Smith 813457

District Councillor
Mrs. Elizabeth Godwin 812793

Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator
Mrs Ann Kent 813204

Parish Council
Chairman Mrs. Elizabeth Godwin 812793

Clerk to the Council
Mrs. Julia Peachey 503912

Princess Alexandra Hospital Harlow 444455

Cubs and Scouts
Trevor Stone 812994

P.T.A. Mrs. Maria Davey 816490

Saturday Football Club
Mr. A. Lucas 813441

Sunday Football Club
Mr. Neil Gilbey 816039

September

18th 11.00 am St Mary's
Matins

25th 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion

2nd 11.00 am St Mary's
Matins

October

9th 11.00 am St Mary's

16th 11.00 am St Mary's
Family service

23rd 11.00 am St Mary's
Matins

30th 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion

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